



Archdiocese of Birmingham

ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Headteacher: Mrs L. J. Yorke M.Ed.



St. Mary's mission: To love God above all things by: learning together, loving ourselves, loving each other, loving all people, loving life itself and constantly striving for excellence worthy of our God-given gifts.

February is dedicated to the Holy Family

Our theme for the Spring term is: 'Options for the Poor and Vulnerable'

Our virtues for this half term are: - 'Curious and Active'



Dear parents and carers,

6th February 2026

Theme - The Beatitudes

Our focus across school has been on the Beatitudes (Jesus' teaching that shows us what true blessing looks like). In Sunday's Gospel, we heard Jesus proclaim that real happiness is found not in power or success, but in humility, mercy, gentleness and a deep desire for what is right. Through our prayer time, we have reflected on what it means to be peacemakers, bringing harmony to our school community by modelling calm, forgiveness and the light of Christ in all we do.

Mental Health Week

This week, the whole school took part in a range of activities for Mental Health Week, all centred around the theme of belonging. Children explored what it means to feel part of a community through creative tasks, collaborative games, quiet-mind moments, meditation, gratitude activities and discussions about emotions, trusted adults and personal wellbeing. They reflected on what makes them feel calm, joyful and connected, and learned simple strategies to support their mental health during times of worry or change. Across the school, pupils showed kindness, teamwork and thoughtful reflection, helping them to understand themselves better and recognise that they are valued members of our school community.

Number day - wear digits

Today we celebrated Number Day with our fun Dress Up for Digits theme. This national event, led by the NSPCC, raises awareness and funds to support the charity's vital work in keeping children safe. Throughout the day, pupils took part in a range of maths-themed activities designed to build confidence, spark curiosity and show that numbers can be exciting and creative. Thank you for supporting this important cause and helping us make maths meaningful and enjoyable for all our children. There were some great costumes today and monetary contributions for the charity.

Year 3 assembly

Year 3 led a beautiful assembly today on the theme of Jesus' temptation in the desert, helping us begin to prepare our hearts for the season of Lent. As Ash Wednesday falls during the half-term break this year, we will start our Lenten journey together when we return to school, continuing to reflect on how we can grow in faith, kindness and self-discipline during this special time.

Parking

Yesterday, members of our School Council wrote to parents to share their concerns about unsafe stopping and parking near school. A copy of their letter is included below. We know that many of our families fully support our efforts to improve parking, as the safety of our children must always come first. Thank you to everyone who continues to park considerately and help us keep the area around school safe for all.

We are upset about inconsiderate parking



Dear Parents,



We are writing to you again about parking round school. This is a problem that we as children cannot do anything about. But you as the drivers can.

We ask that you **not** park on the **Zig-Zags, Double Yellow lines or in the bays between 8-9am and 3-4pm.**

This is a typical example of parent parking. It makes crossing the road dangerous and puts our lives in danger.

We are meeting with Cllr Jayne Francis soon to discuss the situation further and what can be done about improving our safety. Please put us first and be more considerate about how you park. We need to be safe.

Yours sincerely,
Emiliano, Keira, Theo and Charlotte (on behalf of the School Council).

School Council Fundraising

Our School Council has been working with staff to design an exciting new Activity Trail to replace the old one, which has been out of use for safety reasons. To help raise funds for this project, children are invited to take part in our Decorate an Egg competition by bringing in a creatively decorated hard-boiled egg on Monday 2nd March with a £3 entry fee. All entries will be displayed in our "Egg-hibition" on Friday 6th March at 3:45pm, where families can come along for a small entry fee, with all proceeds going towards the new trail. Thank you for supporting this fun community event and helping us improve our outdoor play space.

Mrs Yorke, Headteacher



Catholic Life

This week's Gospel and Prayer

Matthew 5:12A

"Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in Heaven."



Reflecting on this week's Gospel message, the children:

- **Know** true happiness comes from our friendship with God.
- **Follow** the example of St Pier Giorgio Frassati, to live as people of the Beatitudes.
- **Choose** to become saints, through how we love Him and others.
- **Remember** that our reward is to be one day with God in Heaven.



Reception Mass - 4.2.26

Presentation of our Lord

Reception class did an incredible job leading Mass on the Presentation of our Lord this week. Accompanied by their Year 6 Buddies, Reception class were encouraged by Fr. Hilary to reflect upon where they find Jesus.



Our next Mass: - Y4 Mass - St. Josephine Bakhita

Our next Mass in Church will be on **Wednesday 11th February 2026**, starting promptly at 9:15am. Year 4 will be leading this Mass and Year 3 will be there too. All parents are welcome to attend.



Year 3 Assembly - 6.02.26



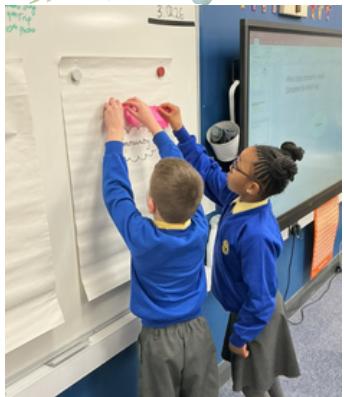
Year 3 are helping us prepare our hearts for Lent. Thank you for leading such a lovely assembly for your peers and parents this morning.





Catholic Life

Our lovely RE learning

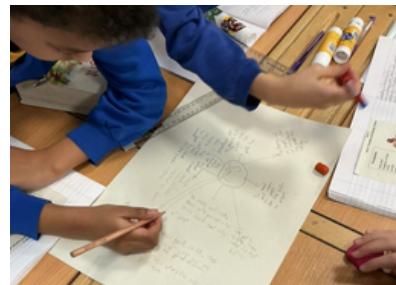


Year 1 explored the parable of the Lost Sheep this week. They stepped into the role of the shepherd, searched the playground for their 'lost sheep,' and were overjoyed when they found them.

Year 4 discussed how the Church is a world-wide community. The children thought about what communities we belong to and how they are different to Church communities.



Reception have been giving thanks for God's gifts. We know that God's gifts are for everyone.



Year 5 have been learning about the parable of the sower, this week.

Prayer – Candlemas

Our prayer focus has been Candlemas, a beautiful feast celebrated 40 days after Christmas. The children learned how Mary and Joseph brought the baby Jesus to the Temple, where Simeon and Anna recognised Him as the Light of the World. We explored what this means for us today—how God keeps His promises, how Mary and Joseph showed faith and trust, and how we are all called to shine God's light through kindness and good choices.



In assemblies, we have explored Jesus as the light of the world during his presentation at the temple. Such a lovely reminder of hope and guidance.

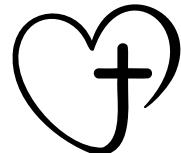


CELEBRATING OUR SUCCESS!

Recognition from the Archdiocese

We are delighted to share a recent message from Steve Bell, Director of Education for the Archdiocese of Birmingham, in which he congratulates our school for the outcomes achieved for disadvantaged children. We are very proud of this recognition, as it reflects our shared mission to care for and support every child in our school family.

We are truly blessed with our children, families, staff, and Parish, and we thank God for the community we serve together. With faith at the heart of all we do, we look forward to continuing to build on these successes in the future.



Dear Mrs Yorke,

Following correspondence with the DfE, I am delighted to write to congratulate you on the excellent outcomes for disadvantaged pupils at St Mary's Catholic Primary School. This is a wonderful testament to your community's deep commitment to placing a 'hunger for justice' at the centre of your mission.

These outcomes don't happen by accident. They are the result of countless small acts of kindness, the professionalism of your staff, and a shared belief that every child - especially those facing the greatest challenges - deserves the very best opportunities. It is clear that your team's faith, dedication, compassion, and high expectations are making a profound difference to the young people who need it most.

I know how demanding this work can be, and how often it requires going the extra mile. Please be assured that such efforts do not go unnoticed. The impact you are having is real, and it sits at the heart of our mission together: to form Christ-centred pilgrims of hope with kind hearts, questioning minds, a thirst for knowledge and a hunger for justice. I am genuinely thrilled to see this recognised in such a positive and tangible way.

Please pass on my warmest congratulations, along with my sincere thanks, to everyone involved - leaders, teachers, support staff, governors, directors, and all who contribute to the life of the school. Their collective commitment is something to be truly proud of.

Best wishes,

Mr S.G. Bell
Director of Education

CELEBRATING OUR SUCCESS!

Behaviour

We recently wrote to parents/carers to highlight the positive impact of our work in fostering positive behaviour for learning at St Mary's. This success reflects a shared commitment among staff, pupils, and families to uphold our values and support every child to succeed. Rooted in our Mission, our behaviour strategy is known, understood and (increasingly) lived by the children of St Mary's.

We are encouraged that this progress has been externally validated by both Beacon School Support (educational behaviour specialists) and our appointed School Improvement Advisor, providing assurance of the impact of our work. The work undertaken by Beacon School Support elicited some very strong data about our children's perception of behaviour in school, as follows:

- **96.8%** of children surveyed said that they felt safe in school
- **93.7%** of children surveyed felt cared for by the adults in school
- **95.2%** of children surveyed said that they are taught how to behave well in school

The following observations also highlight our progress in further detail.
"Behaviour in classrooms and throughout the school during transitions is excellent.
The school is calm and orderly." Beacon School Support

"The Senior Team have successfully shifted the school culture from a focus on discipline to one centred on relationships, supported by clear policies, consistent expectations, and proactive strategies." Beacon School Support

"Behaviour was observed to be very strong around school, with children showing respect and good manners throughout." School Improvement Advisor

However, where issues do arise, we aim to address them swiftly, fairly, and consistently, in line with our behaviour policy. We are not complacent in our approach and continue to reflect critically on our practice. As part of this, we have identified specific areas for further development, including unstructured times such as playtimes and lunchtimes, where we are working hard to ensure expectations remain consistently high. For example, we have introduced a shorter and staggered lunchtime and plans are in place to install an updated activity trail with additional play resources.

We are so grateful to you, our parent/carer body, for helping promote positive behaviour with the children. Here at St Mary's, we remain committed to providing the best possible learning environment—one in which your child feels safe, valued, and supported, and where their God-given gifts are nurtured and enabled to flourish.

Pupil Voice - Enrichment Activities

The children are fortunate to enjoy a number of enrichment activities at school to complement and enhance their learning experience here at St Mary's e.g.: school trips, theatre performances, before/after school clubs, music lessons etc. We have recently sampled the 'pupil voice' and wanted to share the outcome with you:

100% of R/KS1 children enjoyed watching the recent pantomime
91% of all children enjoy the clubs and activities at school

95% of all children believe that St Mary's offers good music lessons or musical opportunities

95% of all children find school trips and special events enjoyable

86% of all children feel happy with the activities and opportunities offered by St Mary's

95% all children feel that St Mary's listens to pupils' ideas and opinions

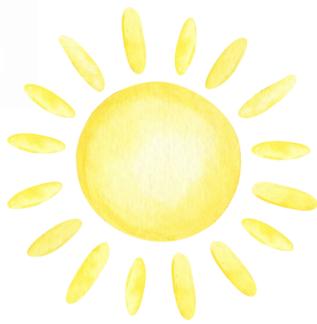
We'll keep listening to the children and use their feedback to further develop and enhance the enrichment opportunities at St Mary's.

Place2Be's

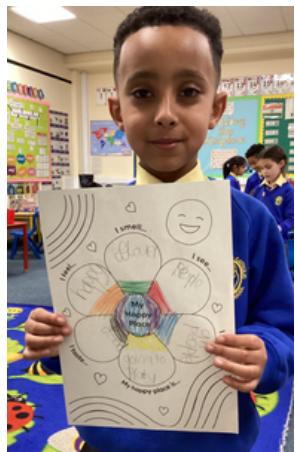
CHILDREN'S
MENTAL HEALTH
WEEK

CURRICULUM

Mental Health Week



Year 1 enjoyed working in teams, and playing a game of dodgeball.



Year 3 enjoyed a dance party and some Lego this week!



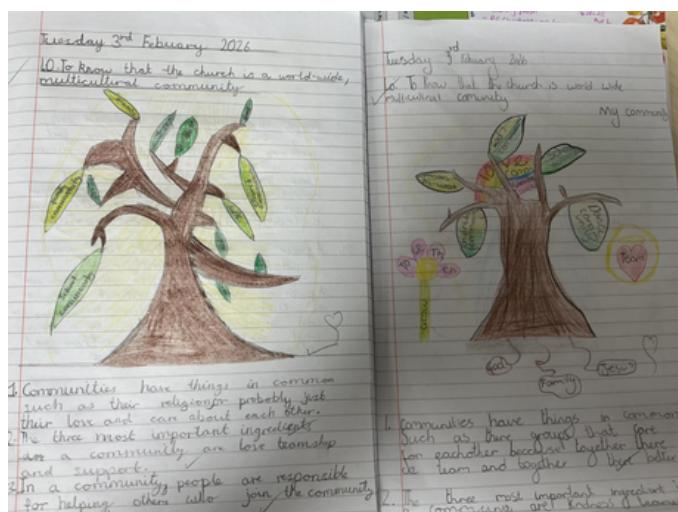
It's
Okay
not to be
Okay

Year 2 embraced Mental Health Week with thoughtful, mindful activities. We're so proud of their calm focus and big hearts.

Year 4 discussed how community's love and support makes us feel better and improves our mental health.



Year 5 took part in a 'story massage' as one of their activities this week



Year 6 enjoyed some mindful colouring as part of Mental Health Week.

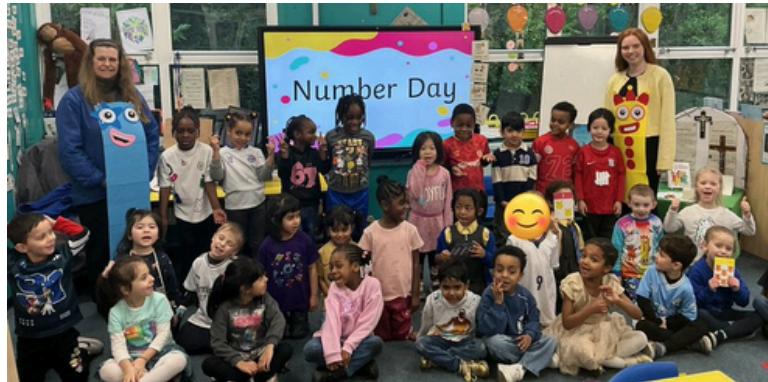


Number Day 2026

CURRICULUM

Dress up as digits

NSPCC Number Day -6.2.26



On Friday 6th February we took part in the NSPCC Number Day! During the day, children took part in exciting maths activities and 'Dressed up for digits.' Look at these fantastic outfits! Thank you for your donations for NSPCC.



Community news

Signposting for half-term activities

This section is to sign-post activities that are taking place over half-term, which you may wish to engage with. As a school we are only sign-posting not necessarily endorsing these clubs.

THE STRINGS CLUB

HARBORNE ACADEMY, B15 3JL

Make the school holidays unforgettable

BUY WOMEN BUILT

Previous attachment

feefo **4.8/5 from parents**

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1 Adult to 8 Children Ratio

www.thestringsclub.org | 0121 296 9204



Online SAFETY WEEK

WB 9.2.26



Year 4 trip to Bosworth Battlefield – 9th February

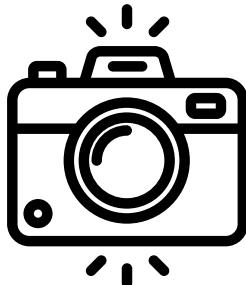
This trip has been carefully planned to complement the children's ongoing studies of the Romans in Britain within their History curriculum. Throughout the day, the children will engage in three immersive teaching sessions: Boudica, Roman Walk, and Roman Archaeology. Children should wear school outdoor PE kit and trainers; and dress suitably for the weather. They will return before the end of the school day.

APPS AND THEIR AGE RATINGS

13+		16+	
 Facebook	 Snapchat	 WhatsApp	
 Instagram	 Twitter		
 TikTok	 Kik	 Sarahah	 MeetMe
 YouNow	 Yubo	 YOLO	 LiveMe
 House Party	 Monkey		

Safer Internet Day – 10.2.26

Tuesday 10th February is Safer Internet Day. Children in school will learn about online safety and how the Internet can be used safely to make changes for the better. We would be delighted if you could join us in celebrating the day by continuing the conversation at home. To help you with this, the UK Safer Internet Centre created some free activities and information for parents and carers a couple of years ago, which are available at: <https://saferinternet.org.uk/guide-and-resource/parents-and-carers>



Class Photos – 10.2.26

Children to wear full winter uniform on Tuesday 10th February as they are having their Year group photos taken. Full uniform is yellow shirt, tie, school jumper or cardigan, grey school trousers, skirt or pinafore, and black smart shoes. No PE kit to be worn on this day.



Other key dates

SATs Week for Year 6

Children in Year 6 will be taking their SATs Tests from **Monday 11th May – Thursday 14th May 2026**.

All Year 6 children are required to be in school every day during SATs week.



Birmingham Irish Association

Dementia Awareness Project



We are pleased to announce that St Mary's are taking part in the Birmingham Irish Association's Dementia Awareness Project. The project raises awareness about dementia among young people through workshops in school. Years 5 and 6 will be taking part in workshops after half term with other year groups to follow later in the year.

The project also offers individual support and small group sessions to children who have a family member living with dementia. Please contact Mrs Noone if you would like your child/children to receive direct support from this project.



**Birmingham Irish
ASSOCIATION**

Dementia Awareness Project



Support group for children who have a family member living with Dementia

When someone close to you has Dementia, it can be a very unsettling and distressing time for the whole family. It can be particularly difficult for children to understand and all the changes can make them feel anxious and worried.

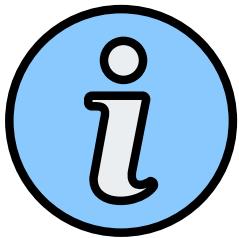
Encouraging children to talk about their thoughts and feelings is important, but we understand this can be challenging. We are offering small group sessions to support children who have a family member living with Dementia. We would like to help them to overcome any fear or worries they may have through talking to other children facing a similar situation.



Supported by
BBC Children in Need

If you would like some more information, please call our Children's Support worker Paulene McDermott on 07495 711 696 or email paulene@birish.org.uk

IRISH YOUTH FOUNDATION



INFORMATION FOR PARENTS/CARERS



SLEEP TIPS FOR HAPPIER, HEALTHIER KIDS HELPING YOUR CHILD TO GET A GREAT NIGHT'S SLEEP

Getting enough good-quality sleep is essential for your child's mood, learning and overall wellbeing. Here's how you can support healthy sleep habits at home.

How Much Sleep Do Kids Need?

Children aged **5-11 years** typically need **9-11 hours** of sleep each night. Every child is different, but if your child is grumpy, struggles to wake up or is overly tired during the day, they may need more rest.

Create a Calm Bedtime Routine

A consistent, calming routine helps signal to your child's brain that it's time to wind down. Try this:

- **Bath or shower** – warm water helps relax the body
- **Quiet time** – read a book together or listen to gentle music
- **Dim the lights** – lower lighting helps melatonin (the sleep hormone) kick in
- **Same bedtime every night** – even on weekends!

Ditch the Screens Before Bed

Blue light from tablets, phones, and TVs can trick the brain into staying awake. Aim for no screens at least 1 hour before bedtime. Instead, try:

- **Drawing or colouring**
- **Listening to an audiobook**
- **Doing a puzzle or quiet play**



We are an operation encompass school. Therefore school is working alongside the police to ensure support for any child who has been involved in or witness to domestic abuse. Please find more information about this on our website or contact the school office.

Pastoral Team

If you require any support from school please speak to a member of our pastoral team

If you require any support from school please speak to a member of our pastoral team

If you have a concern that a child is being harmed, is at risk of harm, or you receive a disclosure (intentionally or unintentionally) you must contact one of the following staff members as quickly as possible:



Laura Noone
Lead DSL
DHT



Louise Yorke
Headteacher



Jade Preedy
AHT



Rachel Jones
Senior Teacher



Sharon Tame
School
Counsellor



Rachel Richards
EYFS Lead



Shania
Birchenall
SENDCo

Do not book holidays during term time

This is a reminder that holidays during term time are unauthorised. If you intend to take your child out of school during term time, we ask that you complete a holiday request form at least 2 weeks prior to the leave date where possible. Parents may be fined by the Local Authority for taking unauthorised leave of absence. Children need to be in school every day so please ensure holidays are only booked during school holiday time.

Good attendance, continues to be a school and government priority. Good attendance is 96% and above. Remember below 95% is a concern and below 90% is classed as persistent absence. If you have any problems with regards to getting your child to school or you are struggling to improve your child's attendance, please speak to Mrs. Yorke or Mrs. Davis.

We will announce the attendance for the previous week in this section of the newsletter each week.

Attendance and Punctuality: -

Our attendance for last week was -

Week 02/02/26-06/02/26

Class	YRB	YRT	Y1L	Y1F	Y2E	Y2G	Y3L	Y3T	Y4J	Y4M	Y5M	Y5F	Y6R	Y6O
%	93	90	97	97	94	98	98	97	95	96	97	99	97	98
Lates	3	1	2	2	1	3	6	4	1	1	1	0	1	5
Whole School Attendance so far this year					97.1%			School Target					97%	

Well done 5F: - Our attendance champions!

Dates for Spring term 2026

Spring theme -

Spring 1 Virtues

WB 9.2.26

9th February 2026 - all day

10th February 2026 - all day

10th February 2026 - all day

11th February 2026 - 9:15am

13th February 2026 - end of day

Options for the Poor and Vulnerable

Curious and Active

Online Safety Week

Year 4 school trip to Bosworth Battlefield

Safer Internet Day

Class photo day - ensure children are in full uniform

Year 4 Mass in Church (and Year 3 classes attend) - parents welcome

Break up for half-term break - normal time

After half-term break...

Spring theme -

Spring 11 Virtues

23rd February 2026 - 8:45am

24th February 2026 - am

25th February 2026 - 9:15am

25th February 2026 - pm

27th February 2026 - 2:30pm

WB 2.3.26

4th March 2026 - 9:15am

5th March 2026 - all day

6th March 2026 - 9:15am

10th March 2026 - am

11th March 2026 - all day

11th March 2026 - 9:15am

13th March 2026 - all day

16th March 2026 - 9:15am 1:15pm

17th March 2026 - am

17th March 2026 - pm

18th March 2026 - 9:15am

19th March 2026 - pm

20th March 2026 - all day

Options for the Poor and Vulnerable

Intentional and Prophetic

Children return to school at normal time

Year 4 library visit - 4M (8:45) and 4J (10:15)

Year 6 Mass in Church (and Year 5 classes attend) - parents welcome

Oliver Twist workshop for Year 6

Reception parent workshop about Maths

Careers Week / Vocations week

Year 3 Mass (and Year 4 classes attend) - parents welcome

World book day - dress as your favourite book character

Year 2 Year group assembly

Year 3 library visit - 3L (8:45) and 3T (10:15)

Reception school trip to Attwell farm

Year 1 Mass in Church (and Year 2 classes attend) - parents welcome

Year 2 trip to Black Country Living Museum

Mothers' Day Inspire Event in school

Year 6 library visit - 6R (8:45) and 6O (10:15)

Parent Consultation Evening

Reception Mass in Church (with Year 6 buddies) - parents welcome

Parent Consultation Evening

Down Syndrome Awareness Day

24th March 2026 - am
 24th March 2026 - 1:30pm
 25th March 2026 - 9:30am
 26th March 2026 - 9:00am
 27th March 2026 - 6:30-8:30pm
 WB 30.3.26
 30th March 2026 - pm
 1st April 2026 - 1:45pm
 2nd April 2026 - 11:00am
2nd April 2026

Year 5 library visit - SF (8:45) and SM (10:15)
 Year 6 Confirmation Workshop with parents
 Whole School Mass - parents welcome
 Year 6 prayer service for parents
 PTA event - Spring Disco in Parish
 Holy Week
 Reconciliation Service for children in Years 4/5/6
 Reception class - Easter Bonnet parade
 Year 6 Stations of the Cross in Church for KS2 and parent
Break up for Easter Holidays
 1:40 finish time - Reception classes
 1:45 finish time - KS1 classes
 1:50 finish time - sibling group
 2:00 finish time - KS2 classes

Term Dates:- Academic Year 2025-2026

Spring Term	Monday 5th January - Friday 13th February
	<i>Half-term</i>
	Monday 23rd February - Thursday 2nd April
Summer Term	Monday 20th April - Friday 22nd May
	<i>Half-term</i>
	Monday 1st June - Friday 17th July

School Closed:

- **Monday 4th May 2026 - May Bank Holiday**

INSET DAYS

- **Monday 1st September 2025**
- **Friday 24th October 2025**
- **Monday 20th July 2026**
- **Tuesday 21st July 2026**



Star of the week

Congratulations to the following children who have shone in school over the last week:

Year RB	Mary	For working really hard and progressing in her phonics!
Year RT	Isabella	For always being a super role model for others!
Year 1F	Jax	For his excellent writing where he used wonderful story language and adjectives.
Year 1L	Roshan	For his excellent reading throughout the week.
Year 2E	Daisy	For being an all-round super star. Keep up the good work Daisy!
Year 2G	Edward	For being a wonderful member of 2G!
Year 3L	Esmee	For always being a helpful, happy member of 3L!
Year 3T	Amira	For her beautiful reflection in RE
Year 4J	Victoria	For her putting 100% effort into being kind to others
Year 4M	Waran	Wonderful attitude to school work and excellent manners
Year 5F	Savannah	For putting others first with her kindness and charity
Year 5M	Darren	For always showing such compassion and care for others! Keep it up!
Year 6O	Arthur	For improved behaviour and effort in class
Year 6R	Fera	For being an exceptional role model for behaviour, kindness and resilience. Well done!

